

Education and Public Involvement Element

Goal of This Planning Element:

To identify available resources and to propose sustainable initiatives to provide residents of the City of Atlanta with information, education, and opportunities for involvement to promote their understanding of the social, economic, environmental, and operational issues and opportunities associated with solid waste management.

This section provides information on the current education and public involvement initiatives being conducted by the City of Atlanta and other organizations. This section also includes needs and goals for continuing education and public involvement initiatives over the 10-year planning period.

7.1 Existing Educational Programs and Public Involvement Opportunities

The City of Atlanta believes that education and public involvement play an important role in the management of the City's solid waste. By strategically informing and educating the public about key solid waste issues, the City can dramatically reduce the waste stream, achieve the Administration's goal of creating a cleaner and safer city, and in turn, improve waste management services and reduce costs. Education and public involvement are integral to an informed citizenry and sustained participation in making Atlanta a cleaner, healthier, and a safer city in which to live.

A variety of solid waste management educational and enforcement programs are in place in the City of Atlanta. For example, the City created the S.W.E.E.T. and HIVE initiatives to target illegal dumping and littering and to educate the public about solid waste regulations defined in the City's Solid Waste Ordinance. Additionally, the City supports many recycling education programs.

7.1.1 Solid Waste Education and Enforcement Team (S.W.E.E.T.) (Existing Program)

S.W.E.E.T. was created by the SWS in 2004 to work with the City of Atlanta Police Department Quality of Life Unit, the Weed and Seed Program, and the Department of Planning and Community Development to enforce the Solid Waste Ordinance (Section 130 of the City of Atlanta Code of Ordinances). The mission of the S.W.E.E.T. program is to "educate the general public, customers, and citizens on all City ordinances governing solid waste disposal, and to build and sustain healthy neighborhoods by ensuring safe and clean communities and public spaces." S.W.E.E.T. educational outreach methods include canvassing neighborhoods to provide door-knob hangers, stickers, flyers, and brochures. S.W.E.E.T. members also attend neighborhood meetings and community events to speak about litter and illegal dumping prevention and to distribute literature. S.W.E.E.T. members

work with citizens through the NPU and the City's community associations to proactively identify and address specific needs with regard to illegal dumping and the Solid Waste Ordinance.

S.W.E.E.T. enforcement activities include patrolling the City and issuing courtesy notices to homeowners, citizens, contractors, and illegal dumpers who have violated sections of the Solid Waste Ordinance relating to public ROWs and city-owned property. Illegal dumpsites and vacant overgrown lots that are private property are reported to the Code Enforcement Division. Six staff members of S.W.E.E.T. patrol the quadrants of the City and enforce the Solid Waste Ordinance. Personnel go door-to-door to educate citizens about the Solid Waste Ordinance and to look for violations such as overgrown vacant lots, illegal dumping, and debris in the ROWs.

"Illegal dumping" is defined as depositing any kind of trash, solid waste, or refuse onto vacant lots, someone else's property, or in public spaces. These items include, but are not limited to, large furniture items, auto parts, junk, trash, and building materials. Enforcement of the Solid Waste Ordinance involves a seven-step process, which is initiated by the issuance of a courtesy ticket/citation. Each courtesy notice specifically outlines which part of the Solid Waste Ordinance is being violated. A follow-up to this initial ticket is conducted and if the violation continues, a second courtesy ticket/citation is given. A second follow-up is conducted and a third courtesy ticket/court citation is provided if the violation is not corrected. Once a court citation is given, a court date and time are set, and a penalty of up to \$500.00 and/or 60 days in jail can be levied. The judge presiding over the case determines the actual amount of each fine. The 2005 City Budget includes funding for additional personnel who will be responsible for coordinating with the City of Atlanta Police Department Quality of Life Unit, and the Department of Planning Housing Code and Compliance section.

7.1.1.1 HIVE Operation

A High Intensity Visibility Enforcement (HIVE) operation is a S.W.E.E.T. initiative that provides a targeted and sustained month-long operation, including cleanup and educational initiatives for identified neighborhoods. S.W.E.E.T. collaborates with the various community and neighborhood associations to form a HIVE operation for an area in that neighborhood that includes both education and enforcement on illegal dumping. This partnership proactively identifies and addresses specific needs with regard to illegal dumping and general solid waste management concerns in that area. The HIVE program operates for 30 days in each area, with the first 2 weeks devoted to introductory meetings in the neighborhood. At these meeting, educational materials are provided and key program elements, including courtesy tickets and proper disposal methods, are explained. The third week of the program consists of illegal dumping cleanup and pickup of scheduled bulk rubbish and yard trimmings. During the fourth week, citations are distributed, as necessary, and the effort culminates in a major community cleanup over a weekend.

7.1.2 Trash Troopers (Existing Program)

The City's Trash Troopers program includes a field crew of approximately 30 people who respond daily to areas where assistance is needed to remove illegal signs, to mow and clear the ROWs, and to clean illegal dumping sites. The City has compiled a master list of illegal

dumpsites which the Trash Troopers are working to clear. Additionally, requests are received through the City's Customer Service (404-521-DUMP [3867]) hotline and via emails from concerned citizens. In 2004, Atlanta's Trash Troopers cleaned 164 illegal dumpsites, 125 vacant lots and disposed of more than 7,300 tons of solid waste.

7.1.3 Customer Service Center (Existing Program)

Customer service is a major priority for the Mayor and the DPW. The Department's Customer Service Unit operates a call center for residents of the City of Atlanta to obtain information about public works services. This call center takes approximately 200 calls a day regarding illegal dumping at (404) 521-DUMP, garbage collection/schedules at (404) 330-6333, and traffic light and street issues at (404) 330-6501. DPW has reorganized the Customer Service Unit, increased staffing, and implemented a new management structure. New managerial changes include oversight and monitoring of calls to ensure courtesy and efficiency. Analyses of call patterns and staffing levels at peak times have yielded significant improvements. The average caller-wait time has been reduced to 2 minutes, and customer surveys indicate that the customer service satisfaction rate has significantly increased.

7.1.4 SWS Service Schedule Information Campaign (Existing Program)

SWS has launched a citywide information campaign in which solid waste operators go door to door on non-service days to hand out information cards explaining the types and schedules of solid waste collections. Information cards are distributed for each neighborhood describing the service days and routes for that particular area. These cards help to inform citizens about the appropriate timing for setting out garbage while also providing reminders to separate waste for more efficient collection.

7.1.5 Recycling and Education Program (Existing Program)

The City of Atlanta has contracted with Dreamsans, Inc., the City's curbside recycling collector, to provide the City's recycling education services. Dreamsans is responsible for providing information materials to residential curbside customers, including items such as a new recycling instructional brochure, recycling information stickers to be applied to each container distributed, adhesive stickers with the new program logo, notices of improper set-out, and a twice-yearly newsletter. Dreamsans collection vehicles are identified with signage and a telephone hotline number in case residents have questions on recycling in the City of Atlanta. Dreamsans's educational program includes providing informative literature such as the User's Guide, which provides a detailed description of the "Do's and Don'ts" of the recycling program. Other point-of-service type of literature is provided to residents to help them comply with the program guidelines. Service notices and/or stickers are provided to residents to inform them of the correct recycling items to place in their recycling bins.

Dreamsans's community outreach includes producing a newsletter that is mailed to each household twice a year. These newsletters provide information about the Atlanta recycling program as well as other recycling options and programs. Dreamsans also provides recycling presentations during "Public Works Week" at City Hall and participates in the City of Atlanta's March of Dimes campaign. Dreamsans representatives also provide recycling presentations to City schools and parent-teacher organizations upon request.

SWS is also exploring partnerships with local elementary schools designed to encourage participation in recycling projects. Potential opportunities include: student field trips to DPW worksites, presentations from DPW subject experts, school exhibits, and science fairs.

7.1.6 Keep Atlanta Beautiful (Existing Program)

Keep Atlanta Beautiful (KAB) was created in 1976 under Mayor Maynard Jackson's administration and was originally called the Atlanta Clean City Commission. The original mission of the organization was to tackle the issues of litter prevention and environmental awareness on a citywide basis. This mission has been expanded to include recycling and general solid waste management issues and education. KAB is an affiliate of the nationwide nonprofit Keep America Beautiful, Inc. and the state affiliate, Keep Georgia Beautiful (KGB). KAB serves the citizens of Atlanta by developing and implementing effective public education and community involvement programs. These programs enhance the quality of life and economic development of the community by instilling pride, a positive attitude, and behavioral changes regarding natural resource conservation, littering, recycling, and beautification. The KAB programs include cleanup projects, recycling drives, teacher training workshops, community presentations, and other efforts which seek the active involvement of interested persons.

KAB has provided annual events, on-going programs, resource information, awareness campaigns, and community support and recognition programs to promote its mission. Annual events have included the Great American Clean Up, Scrap Tire Amnesty Day, Rivers Alive Cleanup, and Bring One for the Chipper. On-going programs include school and community presentations, KAB Mascot Appearances, Health Fairs/Exhibits, Scrap Tire Education, and workshops on Waste in the Workplace. Resource information has included key telephone numbers, recycling options, disposal options, supplies and materials, referrals to support agencies, funding opportunities, and community service workers. Awareness campaigns, including public service campaigns, public service announcements, print and radio advertisement and newsletters, have also been developed. Other programs have included community cleanups, yard and trash bag giveaways, neighborhood assessment, and volunteer recruitment and business recruitment.

7.1.7 Speaker's Bureau/Attendance at Neighborhood Planning Unit and APAB Meetings (Existing Program)

Representatives from the SWS periodically attend NPU, Atlanta Public Advisory Board (APAB), and the City Council's Town Hall meetings to make presentations about solid waste management services in the City of Atlanta. The meetings provide a forum to educate the community about solid waste programs and recycling initiatives. The DPW Commissioner has embarked on a public speaking initiative that includes addressing a number of civic groups each month. All key management staff will be members of the speakers bureau and each will deliver periodic presentations each quarter.

7.1.8 Newsletters (Existing Program)

The DPW currently publishes a quarterly newsletter which is distributed to the public and available via the City website. This newsletter provides information to the residents of

Atlanta regarding solid waste services. It also provides informative articles about recent initiatives as well as contact information for the Customer call center.

7.1.9 Solid Waste Management Planning Advisory Group (Existing Program)

As part of the planning process for this Comprehensive SWMP, Mayor Shirley Franklin's Administration initiated the SWMPAG. The Advisory Group is a diverse group of community and business leaders who have volunteered to provide technical advice to the City on current and future programs for solid waste management in the City of Atlanta. This group will meet regularly to discuss issues and opportunities; review findings and recommended options; examine technical information; and receive and share feedback regarding solid waste management for the City. Planning group members are encouraged to support the planning process and engage as "ambassadors" to the community and business sector on solid waste management. These leaders will help to facilitate communication of information, deliver key messages to the community, and encourage participation in the planning process.

7.1.10 Public Involvement Related to the Development of Comprehensive SWMP (Existing Program)

As part of the planning process for the SWMP, the City prepared a Public Involvement Plan to ensure that public input was incorporated into the Comprehensive SWMP. This Public Involvement Plan identified key stakeholders and target audiences, participation strategies, and participation vehicles.

An initial public hearing was held in May 2004 to announce the update of the SWMP. This meeting was followed by a June 22, 2004, Public Hearing on Planning the Plan, and a third public hearing on September 9, 2004, which outlined the public involvement process. Following the public hearings, five quadrant-based community meetings were held and a wrap-up meeting was conducted at City Hall to obtain input from participants. Additionally, 12 public meetings were held in early 2005. These meetings were held in the City Council districts and were followed by a city-wide input review meeting at City Hall. Table 7-1 lists the meetings that were held as part of the development of this Comprehensive SWMP.

TABLE 7-1
Public Meetings

Meeting	Date	Place
Announcing the Initiation of the Comprehensive SWMP	May 18, 2004	City Hall, Council Chambers, 55 Trinity Ave., SW
Planning the Comprehensive SWMP	June 22, 2004	City Hall, Council Chambers, 55 Trinity Ave., SW
The Public Involvement Process	September 9, 2004	City Hall, Committee Room
City Utilities Committee Meeting	October 26, 2004	City Hall, Committee Room
City Utilities Committee Meeting	November 9, 2004	City Hall, Committee Room
The Short-Term Work Program	September 23, 2004	City Hall, Council Chambers, 55 Trinity Ave., SW

TABLE 7-1
Public Meetings

Meeting	Date	Place
Quadrant Meetings		
Quadrant Meeting (SW)(3)	November 30, 2004	Adamsville Recreation Center, 3201 MLK Jr. Dr., SW
Quadrant Meeting (SE) (4)	December 8, 2003	Grant Park Recreation Center, 537 Park Avenue, SE
Quadrant Meeting (E)(4)	December 13, 2004	Brownwood Recreation Center, 607 Brownwood Avenue, SE
Quadrant Meeting (S)(3)	December 15, 2004	Pittman Recreation Center, 950 Garibaldi Street, SW,
Quadrant Meeting (N)(1)	December 16, 2004	East Rivers Elementary School, 8 Peachtree Battle, NW
Citizen Input/Wrap-Up	December 21, 2004	City Hall, Council Chambers, 55 Trinity Ave., SW
Council District Meetings		
Council District 1- Hon. Carla Smith	January 12, 2005	Georgia Hill Center, 250 Georgia Ave., SE
Council District 3- Hon. Ivory Young	January 13, 2005	City Hall, Council Chambers, 55 Trinity Ave., SW
Council District 10 Hon. C.T. Martin	January 18, 2005	Adamsville Recreation Center, 3201 Martin Luther King, Jr. Dr., SW
Council District 12-Hon. Joyce Sheperd	January 18, 2005	John Burdine Center, 215 Lakewood Way, SW
Council District 4-Hon. Clela Winslow	January 19, 2005	West End Library, 525 Peeples St., SW
Council District 5-Hon. Natalyn Archibong	January 19, 2005	Atlanta/DeKalb Senior Center, 25 Warren Street
Council District 2 Hon. Debi Starnes	January 20, 2005	Martin Luther King, Jr. Center, 90 Boulevard Ave.
Council District 7 Hon. Howard Shook	January 24, 2005	Buckhead Public Library, 269 Buckhead Ave., NW
Council District 6 Hon. Anne Fauver	January 25, 2005	Inman Middle School, 774 Virginia Avenue, N.E.
Council District 8 Hon. Clair Muller	January 26, 2005	Northside Public Library, 3295 Northside Parkway
Council District 9 Hon. Felicia Moore	January 27, 2005	Zone One Precinct, 2315 Donald Lee Hollowell Parkway
Council District 11 Hon. Jim Maddox	January 31, 2005	Southwest YMCA, 2220 Campbellton Rd., SW
Community Input Review Meeting	February 3, 2005	City Hall, Council Chambers, 55 Trinity Ave., SW

Note: City Council President Lisa Borders and At-large Council Members Mary Norwood, Ceasar Mitchell, and Lamar Willis were invited to participate in these Council District Meetings.

The format for the public meetings included a brief overview of the City of Atlanta's solid waste services and a description of the planning elements of the SWMP. At each public meeting, a court reported recorded citizen input solicited during the presentation, and

afterward, through comment opportunities at individual booths set up at the meeting location. In total, over 500 residents participated in a total of 22 community meetings across Atlanta. Citizens provided over 100 comments for consideration as part of the planning process. A summary list of these issues is provided below:

- Provide public education on current ordinances and their enforcement.
- Increase participation in recycling through education.
- Improve frequency and notification of collection schedules.
- Improve customer service.
- Enforce City accountability for standards.
- City-wide culture does not embrace recycling or city beautification.
- General cleanliness of City (public receptacles not emptied, ROWs).
- Police illegal tire disposal.
- Stop illegal dumping.
- Provide for household hazardous waste disposal.
- Restructure sanitation fees.
- Consider weight-based rates.
- Consider volume-based rates.
- Develop incentives for recycling.
- Impose penalties and fines for failure to recycle.
- Use a visitors' tax to defray costs of services.
- Coordinate efforts of City departments, community-based organizations, and agencies.
- Consider parity and equity when siting solid waste handling facilities.

7.1.11 Assessment of Programs

As described in Section 7.1, Existing Educational Programs and Public Involvement Opportunities, the City provides a number of educational and public involvement programs, through which it distributes a variety of educational materials to citizens. These educational materials include brochures, handouts, newsletters, and door hangars which address issues such as illegal dumping, littering, source reduction, recycling, reuse, disposal of hazardous waste, composting, and solid waste disposal. Recent efforts by SWS operations staff going door-to-door through neighborhoods to provide solid waste service and schedule cards have been successful in providing information directly to Atlanta residents.

SWS representatives also distribute educational materials at NPUs and APAB meetings. These meetings are also a forum to educate the community about solid waste programs and recycling initiatives. The SWS also posts educational information on the City website and staffs and operates the Customer Service call center for illegal dumping and waste collections/schedules. Recent efforts to improve customer service have been successful, and the customer satisfaction rate has significantly improved. The caller wait-time has also been reduced to 2 minutes, and the satisfaction rate based on surveys conducted has increased from 11 percent to 65 percent.

The City currently operates several hands-on programs (such as Trash Troopers, S.W.E.E.T. and HIVE) that target vacant lot cleanup and illegal dumping. These programs focus on both residential and commercial facilities and provide owners with educational materials

about disposal of bulky waste, yard waste disposal, and composting alternatives. In 2004, Atlanta's Trash Troopers cleaned 164 illegal dumpsites, 125 vacant lots and disposed of more than 7,300 tons of solid waste.

Other programs conducted by KAB and Dreamsan help to raise awareness in the community of the need to recycle and ways to properly dispose of solid waste items. These recycling education programs have been successful because the City has increased its recycling participation rate and the yard trimming disposal rate. In 2003, approximately 6,985 tons of residential solid waste from single- and multi-family residences serviced by the City were collected for recycling. Since 2001, the amount of residential solid waste disposed has decreased steadily, which indicates an increase in source reduction and/or recycling. In 2003, the residential recycling rate in the City of Atlanta was approximately 0.09 pound per capita per day.

In 1996, the City began collecting yard trimmings separately from residential refuse. The City does not dispose of yard trimmings, but instead processes the material and sells it for reuse as boiler fuel to various mills. In 2003, the City of Atlanta collected approximately 20,837 tons of yard trimmings. From 1997 to 2003, the amount of yard trimmings collected by the City of Atlanta increased by approximately 252 tons per year.

During the series of public information meetings held during the preparation of this plan, many citizens requested additional solid waste educational initiatives. Areas where people specifically requested additional education included schedule and frequency of solid waste pickup, information regarding set-out limits, composting techniques, and recycling and reuse options for bulky waste in order to prevent illegal dumping of discarded items such as tires. Other long-term educational needs were also recommended, including focusing on waste-to-energy options and landfill usage. Other suggestions regarding education included the need to train SWS employees to serve as ambassadors who represent the City, to partner with existing organizations and media outlets to educate people about the advantages of recycling, and to efficiently provide better information to new Atlanta residents about solid waste services, costs, and ways to participate in the recycling program.

7.2 Needs and Goals

The City is involved in a variety of public education efforts aimed at providing the public with information, education, and opportunities for involvement to promote their understanding of the social, environmental, and economic concerns, needs, and opportunities associated with solid waste management. The City plans to continue providing an open line of communication to the residents of Atlanta in order to provide information, education, and opportunities for public involvement. Additionally, the City is committed to receiving information from residents about the needs, interests, and recommendations for improving waste and source reduction.

These existing programs are effective at informing and educating the public about solid waste issues and helping the City reach the State goal of 25 percent reduction in solid waste since 1992. In the future, the City will continue to build on these programs while also consolidating its efforts into key information, education, and public involvement programs and initiatives discussed below.

7.2.1 Partnerships with Other Organizations

To augment the limited resources available to most municipal governments, the City will form partnerships with other solid waste education organizations. By establishing partnerships, the City can leverage expertise and labor of other community organizations that have similar missions to reduce solid waste. By partnering with and participating in these other organizations, the City can concentrate its efforts on efficient and successful solid waste programs. Some suggested organizations include:

7.2.1.1 Other City of Atlanta Office and Governmental Organizations (Enhanced Program)

The SWS will continue to partner with City of Atlanta departments, such as the City of Atlanta Police Department Quality of Life Unit, the Weed and Seed Program, the Department of Planning, and the Department of Watershed Management, to enforce the Solid Waste Ordinance (Section 130 of the City of Atlanta Code of Ordinances). The City of Atlanta also will work with other governmental organizations such as Atlanta Public Schools and the Atlanta Housing Authority to educate people about recycling, solid waste services and reducing illegal dumping in vacant areas. In addition, the City will work with State governmental agencies and leverage resources provided by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs, the Georgia Department of Natural Resources Pollution Prevention Assistance Division, and existing environmental programs through the Army Environmental Policy Institute, Fort McPherson, and Fort Gillem.

7.2.1.2 Keep Atlanta Beautiful (Enhanced Program)

In the past, KAB has provided educational support on a variety of topics such as litter reduction, neighborhood beautification, recycling, and general solid waste management issues and education. Past programs have also included cleanup projects, recycling drives, teacher training workshops, and community presentations. Efforts will be made to expand KAB's outreach efforts and community beautification programs and projects in the future.

7.2.1.3 Other Community/Environmental Groups/Faith-Based Organizations (Enhanced Program)

The City has sought and will continue to seek counsel on specific solid waste projects from external environmental and educational groups such as the Audubon Society, Sierra Club, and other local environmental groups. The City will continue to work with the environmental groups to establish strong partnerships through which educational materials can be shared and public outreach can be enhanced. The City will also provide educational materials to faith-based organizations and other community groups that are willing to promote grass roots waste reduction and solid waste management education.

7.2.1.4 Public-Private Initiatives (New Program)

The following Atlanta entities manage notable recycling programs that are integral to their daily business operations: Atlanta Financial Center, AT&T, Coca-Cola, Georgia Power, and Emory University. Efforts will be made to partner with these and other Atlanta area entities in the future. Commercial enterprises with existing recycling programs will be showcased in the SWS Speaker's Bureau as examples to encourage other entities to participate in solid waste reduction initiatives. The City will also consider implementing a recognition

program for neighborhoods and commercial businesses that participate in recycling programs and neighborhood clean up initiatives.

7.2.1.5 Membership in Industry and Trade Organizations (Enhanced Program)

City staff maintain membership and participate in professional solid waste management organizations such as the Solid Waste Association of North America (SWANA), the National Recycling Coalition (NRC), the U.S. Conference of Mayors, the Institute of Solid Waste of the American Public Works Association (APWA), and the Georgia Recycling Coalition (GRC). These organizations can provide input on cutting-edge technologies as well as best management practices and trends in the industry.

7.2.1.6 Volunteer Programs (Enhanced Program)

The KAB has supported many neighborhood cleanup projects. Past programs have included the Downtown's Picking Up project, Spring and Fall Into Recycling, and the Glad Bag-A-Thon. Other projects that have been successful include telephone book recycling and Christmas tree recycling. The City has been named one of five recipients of a Gateway Grant, sponsored by Scotts, Inc. This grant will provide landscaping materials for a one-day neighborhood beautification/community garden project. In the future, the City will continue to partner with volunteer organizations such as Hands on Atlanta, corporate sponsors, and community groups willing to provide similar incentives and support volunteer cleanup events. The City will team with neighborhood groups to create more community involvement opportunities, such as quarterly City-sponsored community cleanup events. Private sponsorship will be established to support the Tire Amnesty Day and proposed Treasure Swap days. The City will consider supporting a City-wide treasure swap day, in that residents can place bulky waste on the street corner for swapping and sharing with other residents. Any bulky waste that is not claimed on the treasure swap day will be removed by the SWS. Together with the distribution of educational materials on litter control, neighborhood cleanups can help change habits and attitudes regarding individual responsibility for litter control.

7.2.1.7 Southface and Earthshare (New Program)

Nonprofit organizations such as Southface provide information on sustainability and recycling initiatives. Earthshare 911 provides telephone numbers and websites with detailed recycling location drop-off sites. These organizations are a free resource to the community and will be advertised and promoted through City handouts and the City website.

7.2.1.8 Environmental Justice Resource Center (EJRC) at Clark Atlanta University (New Program)

The Clark Atlanta University (CAU) Environmental Justice Resource Center (EJRC) provides information regarding environmental justice considerations and serves as a research, policy, and information clearinghouse on issues related to environmental justice. The City will seek assistance and support from this organization when considering siting of solid waste handling facilities in the future.

7.2.1.9 Georgia Institute of Technology (New Program)

The Georgia Institute of Technology's Office of Solid Waste Management and Recycling operates a comprehensive recycling program. The City will consider establishing a partnership with Georgia Tech and encouraging the use of Georgia Tech's program model for large office complexes and other schools and universities that do not currently have a recycling program.

7.2.2 Public Outreach

The City will continue to work to increase delivery the solid waste and recycling education message to residents. This goal can be achieved by increasing the public outreach and educational programs. Existing educational materials will be distributed by the SWS at public meetings as well as periodically to residents and business owners during scheduled pickups.

7.2.2.1 Enhanced Enforcement and Follow-Up of Solid Waste Ordinance (Enhanced Program)

Members of the S.W.E.E.T. Team, Trash Troopers, and HIVE program can serve as ambassadors to the City residents providing educational material to help prevent illegal dumping and to explain yard waste and bulky waste disposal requirements. Public education will also be improved by systematically providing citations and follow-up information regarding infractions of the Solid Waste Ordinance. Additionally, fines for violations of the Solid Waste Ordinance may be increased and strict fines for environmental crimes levied.

7.2.2.2 Speaker's Bureau/Attendance at NPU and APAB Meetings (Enhanced Program)

The City will continue to support a solid waste Speaker's Bureau and to provide technical assistance to local government, schools, businesses, civic groups, and individuals in the community. Efforts to speak at NPU and APAB meetings will be continued and expanded in the future. Additional efforts will be made to speak with business owners and multi-family residents to encourage recycling participation.

7.2.2.3 Customer Service Call Center (Enhanced Program)

Customer service is a major priority for the Mayor and the DPW. Continued support of the Customer Service call center and advertising of the illegal dumping hotline—(404) 521-DUMP—and garbage collections/schedules—(404) 330-6333—will continue to provide information to the public about solid waste services. Additional customer service training will be extended to solid waste operations employees, who serve as ambassadors to the City on a daily basis. Additional customer service training can help these operations employees readily provide residents with information and answers to solid waste service-related questions.

7.2.2.4 Recycling Coordinator and Staffing Requirements (Enhanced Program)

In addition to filling the position of the Recycling Coordinator, the City will also consider expanding this role to include a community involvement component. Equally, as the recommended projects and initiatives are implemented, current staffing levels will be evaluated to determine if additional positions will be required to support the proposed initiatives.

7.2.2.5 Information and Public Awareness Campaign (Enhanced Program)

Information campaigns can range from public service announcements to co-sponsorship of recycling projects, as has occurred with local television news channels. Additionally, the DPW has developed a series of information pieces on recycling and solid waste reduction for broadcast on the City's television channel, Channel 26. Other media campaign efforts have included media sponsorship of recycling initiatives such as the Christmas Tree Recycling Project. These initiatives help to promote recycling initiatives and attract free media coverage. The Atlanta Journal-Constitution also frequently covers environmental and solid waste issues. In the future, the information and public awareness campaign will be expanded to include more communication in diverse mediums and languages. Specific emphasis will be placed on announcing service schedules and changes in these schedules. Additional efforts will be made to broaden solid waste management media campaigns to include more radio and television support for recycling programs through public service announcement and other press releases. As part of these efforts, the DPW will sponsor a recycling awareness day for all city employees. In the future, the City will enhance the existing SWS website to provide more in-depth and accessible information about solid waste management programs. Specific items to be added to the City website include:

- Service schedules and changes to service schedules
- Notices about solid waste management public meetings
- Information on junk mail reduction
- Information on composting
- Information on reusable shopping bags
- City and privately owned drop-off center locations for fluorescent tubes, E waste (computer-related electronics), refrigerants, and cardboard
- "Don't Dispose--Donate" locations
- Waste-exchange organizations
- Newcomer information for new residents
- Herbie Curbies and recycling bin information
- Annual recycling newsletter
- Speakers Bureau contact information

7.2.2.6 School Programs (Enhanced Program)

Currently Dreamsan provides recycling education programs to schools located throughout the metro Atlanta area. In the future, Dreamsan will partner with the Atlanta Public School system to formalize teacher training seminars and presentations to students and parent-teacher organizations. Additionally, the City will help to ensure that recycling education is included in Earth Day activities.

7.2.2.7 Community or Neighborhood Educational Programs (Enhanced Program)

It is important to continue to fund the education budget of the current recycling vendor for recycling education (Dreamsan, Inc.); this funding will be specifically earmarked for media,

printing, and production costs. Dreamsan will continue its outreach efforts to include the Atlanta Public School system children and parent-teacher organizations.

7.2.2.8 Environmental Education Center and Greenspace Park (New Program)

The Hartsfield Solid Waste Reduction Plant is currently used to recycle yard trimmings into mulch that is used for boiler fuel for various mills in the Southeast. In the future, this facility can be expanded into an Environmental Education Center and Greenspace Park. For more information on this program, refer to Section 3.5.3.8, Conversion of Hartsfield Solid Waste Reduction Plant to Environmental Education Center and Park.

7.2.2.9 Advisory Groups

When necessary, the City will form advisory groups to assist in the solid waste management initiatives identified in this Plan. Advisory groups will consist of key stakeholders (both community and business leaders) who will meet to discuss the various initiatives' issues and opportunities, review findings and recommended options, examine technical information, and receive and share feedback. The advisory groups will serve the City as ambassadors to the residential and business communities by informing and educating the community on the specific initiatives. The groups will also help to facilitate communication, deliver key messages, encourage participation in the planning process, and build consensus on recommended options for solid waste management.

7.2.3 Educational Materials

The City will continue to expand the solid waste and recycling education message to as many citizens as possible. This goal can be achieved by increasing the distribution of educational materials to a wide array of city residents. Existing educational materials will be distributed by the SWS at public meetings as well as periodically to residents and business owners during scheduled pickups.

7.2.3.1 Factsheets and Handouts (Enhanced Program)

The City has created a variety of factsheets and handouts that describe the Solid Waste Ordinance, the HIVE program focusing on illegal dumping, the recycling program, set-out limits, composting tips, pickup schedules and frequency, and other options for recycling. The City will continue to canvass neighborhoods through the S.W.E.E.T. program and periodically distribute these materials to residents and users through NPU meetings and other community events. Additional educational material will be distributed which describes alternative technologies and encourages multi-family residents and business owners to participate in the recycling program.

7.2.3.2 Programs to Notify and Involve the Public (Enhanced Program)

The City staff provides technical assistance through periodic recycling neighborhood canvasses and via the Customer Service call center. The SWS also responds to calls and written requests for information and materials. Recycling brochures, educational materials, and public meeting notices will be posted on the City of Atlanta website to improve access by and distribution to the public. The database will also be periodically updated to ensure important messages reach more residents.

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